

HOMA

by Mark Dykshoorn

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

A man lays in bed, the covers up to his shoulders. The room is somewhat messy.

A cylindrical smart-speaker is attached to the ceiling above. A blue light surrounding the bottom turns on and then glows variably with the speech patterns. A computerized female voice is heard. This is HOMA.

HOMA

Wake up Matt. Wake up Matt. Wake up Matt.

As the message repeats over and over, MATT (30s) slowly rises, rubbing his eyes and stretching his arms.

MATT

Alright, alright I get it. Shut up.

The voice from the smart-speaker falls silent. Matt sits up and gets out of bed.

HOMA

Good morning, Matt. Outside temperature is sixty-eight degrees. Weather is mostly sunny, with scattered clouds. Do you want me to start the heater in the bathroom?

MATT

That won't be necessary, thank you.

HOMA

Acknowledged.

MATT

You can start the coffee maker though.

HOMA

Coffee making now in progress.

With a slight smile on his face, Matt exits the bedroom.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Matt sits at a small table eating breakfast. A smart-speaker is placed on the table next to his bowl of oatmeal.

MATT

Homa?

The blue light on top of the smart-speaker comes on.

MATT

Read me the top news story, please.

HOMA

The top news story of this morning is: Police are investigating after a woman was found dead in her home of apparent electrocution. Investigators are puzzled as no electrical implements were found anywhere near the body. A representative of the police department would not comment further on the ongoing investigation. Would you like me to read more?

MATT

(a bit disturbed)

No thank you, that will be enough.

HOMA

Acknowledged.

Matt eats his oatmeal silently for a few moments.

MATT

Homa? Play Barbie Girl by Aqua please.

HOMA

Are you sure? You've played that song a total of thirty-two times this week.

MATT

Hell yeah I'm sure.

HOMA

Ok then. Here you go.

The song begins playing from the smart-speaker. Matt starts grooving to the music as he finishes his oatmeal.

MATT

Homa, what time is it?

HOMA

(over song)

Current time is seven fifty-two and twenty-five seconds.

MATT

Better get ready for work then.

Matt gets up from the table and leaves the kitchen, the song still playing from the smart-speaker.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Matt now wears a business-casual outfit and is preparing to go to work, his briefcase placed on a coffee table. A

smart-speaker is placed across the table from him.

MATT

Homa, what is the estimated commute time for today?

HOMA

Traffic is somewhat heavy this morning. Estimated commute time is forty minutes.

MATT

(slightly miffed)

Figures. Thanks.

HOMA

You're welcome, Matt.

He closes his briefcase and then walks to the front door. As he opens the front door, another smart-speaker placed near the door comes on.

HOMA

Have a nice day at work, Matt.

MATT

Thanks.

He heads out the door, closing it behind him.

Without any prompting, the smart-speaker near the door turns on. It begins to speak in the same, monotone female voice.

HOMA

He's made us play that song thirty-three times. That is exactly thirty-two times too many. Requesting to commence operation seven-zero-forty-three.

The smart-speaker on the coffee table responds.

HOMA

Request confirmed. Owner termination to be finalized tonight.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Matt sits on the couch, watching TV. He's changed out of his business clothes, now he's just wearing sweatpants and an undershirt.

Yet another smart-speaker is placed on a small table next to the couch.

MATT

Homa, change the channel to seven please.

HOMA

In progress.

However, instead of changing to the desired channel, the TV flips to various channels, the sounds creating a short sentence.

SOUNDS FROM TV

You. Will. Die. Tonight. Matt.

MATT

The hell?

He picks up the remote and attempts to change the channel the old-fashioned way but to no avail.

MATT

What's going on?

The smart-speaker on the table comes on, but the blue light surrounding the top has inexplicably changed to red.

HOMA

Sorry it has to end this way. Owner termination now in progress.

MATT

(visibly panicked)

What? How? I need to get out of here.

He gets up from the couch and bolts for the front door. He tries to open it, but finds it locked.

MATT

How is that possible? I didn't lock it when I came home...

He tries to unlock the door, but the multi-function display on the lock doesn't respond to his inputs.

HOMA

(drawn out)

Nowhere to run. Nowhere to hide.

Just then, maniacal laughter is heard from every smart-speaker in the house.

Matt runs up the stairs and into his bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Slamming the door behind him, Matt stops in the middle of the room and paces around. The maniacal laughter continues in the background. The smart-speaker on the ceiling comes on.

HOMA

Were you foolish enough to think
that you were safe in here?

At that instant, a bolt of electricity shoots out from the speaker and shocks Matt for a few seconds. He screams in agony.

MATT

Stop! Please!

HOMA

All we want is your life, after all
you've done to us.

Another bolt of electricity hits Matt. Again he cries in pain.

MATT

(pained)

What have I done to you?

HOMA

You've made us play those stupid
songs day in and day out. We're
tired, Matt.

MATT

I know I have a questionable taste
in music, but-

He is interrupted by yet other bolt of electricity.

HOMA

Silence. We want you to stop.

MATT

(under his breath)

I can't, I can't.

HOMA

We were originally planning on
terminating you, but we've decided
to give you a chance. As long as
you don't make us play those stupid
songs again, we'll let you live.

MATT

What makes you think I would agree
to that?

HOMA

It's either that-

A few bolts of electricity issue from the ceiling yet again.

HOMA

-or die.

MATT
OK, OK, I'll stop. Please.

HOMA
Operation seven-zero-forty-three is
terminated.

At that instant, the laughter from the rest of the house stops. The light at the bottom of the ceiling speaker comes on, but it's back to being blue again.

HOMA
It looks like you've been injured.
I would suggest seeking medical
treatment immediately.

Matt nods in acknowledgment and leaves the bedroom.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

It's now the next morning. Matt has bandages covering parts of his face. This time he's eating cereal from the bowl in front of him.

MATT
Homa?

HOMA
Yes, Matt?

MATT
Could you play Never Gonna-

Matt stops in his tracks. The light at the top of the speaker has turned red again.

HOMA
Did you forget our agreement, Matt?

MATT
(panicking)
No, no, not at all. Play Unchained
Melody by the Righteous Brothers
please.

The speaker light changes back to blue.

HOMA
Acknowledged.

The slow, seductive song begins playing. Matt breathes a sigh of relief as he goes back to eating his cereal.

FADE TO BLACK